

from Florida (Ms. BROWN-WAITE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

WASHINGTON WASTE WATCHERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HENSARLING. Madam Speaker, I rise tonight, along with my colleague, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART), as cofounder of a new Republican effort dedicated to bringing the disinfectant of sunshine into the shadowy corners of the wasteful Washington bureaucracy. We call ourselves the "Washington Waste Watchers."

Do not be confused, the Washington Waste Watchers are not about counting calories. It is about counting the myriad of ways that the Federal bureaucracy routinely wastes the hard-earned money of the American family. We are here to look after the family budget by checking the growth of the Federal budget.

Madam Speaker, I am sure all of my colleagues are well aware of the size of our Federal deficit. It is large and getting larger every day; and, to compound the challenge, we are presently faced with a supplemental appropriation request of \$87 billion to help fight the war on terror. I believe, after much debate and due diligence, that this body will pass most, if not all, of that request. I, for one, agree that it is far better to fight this war over there, as opposed to over here. And although I have concerns about portions of the request, I fundamentally believe that helping rebuild the infrastructure and the civil society of Iraq is just as important in winning this war as are additional combat troops and munitions.

So, faced with unparalleled homeland security needs and a growing budget deficit, what are we to do?

Democrats say the only way to cut the deficit is to yet again raise the taxes on the American family. Sound familiar? It is the same refrain we have heard from them for years.

We do have a large budget deficit, but it is not because the American people are undertaxed. It is because Washington spends too much.

Since I was born, the Federal budget has grown seven times faster than the family budget; seven times. This is unconscionable. And putting aside the war on terror, the Democrats, who claim to be concerned about budget deficits, have voted to spend almost \$1 trillion more than our budget allows; \$1 trillion more. There is a spending problem in Washington, not a taxing problem. Much of the spending in Washington is pure waste, fraud, and abuse; and by attacking it every day, we can begin to close this deficit.

For a moment, let us talk about the waste of duplication.

There are more than 90 programs across 11 different agencies to support the early development of children. For example, there are 9 Federal agencies and 69 different programs to educate and care for children under the age of 5. There are 29 different programs offering early education for children within the Department of HHS, itself having 4 separate programs to educate those from low-income families. And Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this?

The Federal Government operates 342 different economic development programs; 342. And, by the way, what does the Federal Government know about economic development anyway?

There are 86 different programs in 9 Federal agencies to assist teachers in improving their teaching skills. This is on top of the thousands that already exist at the State level. Also, if we already have a Department of Education, why do we need teaching programs spread over 9 different agencies? Yet Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this.

Madam Speaker, 12 different Federal agencies are responsible for food safety. For example, the Department of Agriculture inspects meat pizzas, while vegetarian pizzas are under the purview of the Department of Health and Human Services. Only in Washington, D.C., could this absurd result happen.

The Federal Government operates at least 70 programs dedicated to helping the disabled. About half of these duplicate programs cost taxpayers close to \$110 billion annually. That is a quarter of the cost of the 10-year prescription drug bill for our seniors. And Democrats want to raise our taxes to pay for more of this?

Madam Speaker, these are just a few of the examples of rampant duplication and waste throughout our Federal Government. After we begin to look closely, it is easy to see that many Federal programs routinely lose 10, 20, 30 percent of their taxpayer-funded budgets to waste, fraud, and abuse, and they have for years.

In the real world, when people lose that much money, they are either fired or they go to jail. But in Washington, it is only an excuse to ask for even more money from the American family next year.

There are many ways we can cut the deficit without cutting any needed services, because when it comes to Federal programs, it is not how much money Washington spends, it is how Washington spends the money.

QUESTIONING OUR PATRIOTISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, over the past week there has been a lot of talk in the chambers of Congress about what it means to be patriotic. The Republican leadership would have

us believe that patriotism is asking no questions and voicing no concerns. According to them, patriotism is simply handing over \$87 billion tied with a bright red bow and a card attached to it that says, here is the money you asked for. Go ahead and spend it how you want.

Madam Speaker, this is not patriotic. This would be neglecting our constitutional duty to oversee how taxpayers' dollars are spent, and it is an obligation that I think we need to take very seriously when considering this supplemental bill. We need to take it seriously not only for the taxpayers but also, more importantly, for our soldiers.

There is not a person in this chamber who would vote against supporting our troops. They are serving bravely and honorably in a faraway land for far longer than anyone expected, and our prayers are with them and their families. Our troops are the true patriots, and the patriotism I see in this debate is demonstrated by those demanding the best for those troops.

Unfortunately, the war plan may have failed to adequately protect our troops. Details may have been overlooked.

Members of Congress returning from Iraq talk about the lack of Kevlar inserts and the need for heavier armor for Humvees. The \$87 billion supplemental includes these items. But why were these items not in the \$79 billion Congress provided the administration last spring? Kevlar inserts cost \$517, \$517 for a life-saving device. I ask my colleagues, why was there not enough money for each soldier to have a Kevlar insert? Did we not foresee our soldiers being shot at? Unfortunately, my question is not one that will be answered, or as the chief of the U.S. Central Command said last week, "I can't answer for the record why we started this war with protective vests that were in short supply."

Madam Speaker, there is no answer, or at least no answer that could satisfy this Member of Congress. Where was the money to armor up our military vehicles? The Department of Defense thinks we only need \$177 million to do it now. Again, why was this not done with the \$79 billion appropriated last April? Why was the money not provided to protect our soldiers in these vehicles from gunshots and shrapnel from these roadside bombs?

So, I say to my Republican friends, you will have to excuse us if we insist on exercising our constitutional duty, one that I happen to believe is our patriotic duty, to ensure that we get our priorities straight and protect our young men and women in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

In examining patriotism and priorities, I cannot help but wonder if singlehandedly rebuilding Iraq while our country remains in economic downturn is the most patriotic use of this \$20 billion in proposed reconstruction funding. I see part of this funding going towards a children's hospital in Iraq